

REMARKS

Claims 9-19 are pending in the subject application. The Examiner has rejected claims 9-13 and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nishimura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,051). The Examiner has indicated that claims 14, 15 and 19 are objected to and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have amended independent claim 9 to include the limitations of claim 14 and intervening claim 11. Thus, Applicants believe that claim 9, as amended, and claims dependent thereupon are in condition for allowance.

Therefore, Applicants believe that the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) have been overcome and it is respectfully requested that the pending claims be passed to issuance in view of the amendments and remarks.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing remarks, all of the claims now presented are believed to be in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request that the outstanding objections be withdrawn and this application be passed to issue at an early date.

The Examiner is urged to call the undersigned at the number listed below if, in the Examiner's opinion, such a phone conference would aid in furthering the prosecution of this application. No fee is due by virtue of this amendment. However, if the PTO determines that a fee is required, please charge Applicants' Deposit Account, 09-0456.

Respectfully Submitted,

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